

Washington State University
MAJOR CHANGE FORM – REQUIREMENTS

NOTE: If proposing a **new** program (degree) or **extending, moving, consolidating, eliminating or renaming** an existing program (degree), these proposals must first go through the Provost's Office review process. Please do not use this form. Please contact the Provost's Office for directions on processing program (degree) proposals.

SUBMITTING PROPOSAL – Follow the steps on form, then:

- ☐ **Submit one electronic copy of complete packet of signed form/rationale statement/supporting documentation and/or edits** to wsu.curriculum@wsu.edu.
- ☐ Send the **original stapled packet PLUS 10 stapled copies** of packet to the **Registrar's Office**, campus mail code 1035.

Department Name School of Biological Sciences

1. Check proposed changes:

- ☐ New Plan (Major) *in* _____ CIP# ____.
- ☐ Change name of Plan (Major) *from* _____ *to* _____
- ☐ Revise certification requirements for the Plan (Major) *in* _____
- ☒ Revise Plan (Major) requirements *in* M.S. Plant Science
- ☐ Drop Plan (Major) *in* _____
- ☐ New Sub-Plan (Option) *in* _____ CIP# ____.
- ☐ Change name of Sub-Plan (Option) *from* _____ *to* _____
- ☐ Revise requirements for the Sub-Plan (Option) *in* _____
- ☐ Drop Sub-Plan (Option) *in* _____
- ☐ New Minor *in* _____ CIP# ____.
- ☐ Change name of Minor *from* _____ *to* _____
- ☐ Revise Minor requirements *in* _____
- ☐ Drop Minor *in* _____
- ☐ New Certificate *in* _____ CIP# ____.
- ☐ Change name of Certificate *from* _____ *to* _____
- ☐ Revise Certificate requirements *in* _____
- ☐ Drop Certificate *in* _____
- ☐ Other _____

2. Effective Date: Fall 2016 (Effective date must be for future fall term.) **Submission deadline is Oct 1st.**

NOTE: Items received after deadlines may be put to the back of the line or forwarded to the following year. Please submit on time.

Contact: Justine Rupp Phone number: 335-8649
Email: ruppj@wsu.edu Campus mail code: 6414

3. PLEASE ATTACH A RATIONALE STATEMENT giving the reasons for each request marked above, and explaining how this impacts other units in Pullman and other campuses (if applicable).

4. PROVIDE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION AND/OR CURRENT CATALOG COPY with edit marks showing requested changes.

5. SIGN AND DATE APPROVALS.

[Signature] 22 Sept. 2015 [Signature] 7-23-2015
Chair Signature/date Dean Signature/date CSC Date

Chair Signature/date

Dean Signature/date

AAC or GSC Date

Senate Date

September 17, 2015

Proposed Major Curricular Change to MS Plant Biology Degree

Faculty in the School of Biological Sciences voted strongly in favor of adding two requirements to the MS in Plant Biology degree program. I outline these requirements and their justification below.

Historical context: In 2011, SBS proposed, and had approved programmatic changes (see Current Requirements below) that streamlined our graduate program. Here, we propose two additional requirements are, in fact, quite minor and for the direct benefit of the students. In 2014 (effective August, 2015) we proposed, and had approved degree name changes for all of our graduate programs, and as such, the former “Botany” MS is now entitled “Plant Biology.”

Requirement #1: Attend departmental seminars. Students will need to enroll in Biology 500 (an existing course entitled, “Seminar”) for 1 credit each Fall and Spring semester they are enrolled. Course grade will be S/F and be based on attendance. Students will be required to attend a minimum of 10 SBS departmental seminars (out of ~15 each semester) and 2 additional seminars (outside of SBS) to achieve a passing grade. Students’ attendance will be tracked with a sign in sheet at the beginning of each seminar. Under certain circumstances (e.g., a substantial portion of a semester will be spent doing off-campus field work or training), a student may submit a request to the Associate Director for Graduate Studies for an exemption for that particular semester.

Justification: Student attendance and participation in SBS departmental seminars has been waning in recent years, despite repeated pleas to attend seminar by faculty, student attendance has been strictly discipline focused. Not only are seminars of great benefit to students as a learning experience to be exposed to a diversity of information, but also as a training tool so students can learn to appreciate the factors that make distinguish good presentations from not as good presentations. In addition, when external speakers come and there is poor overall attendance, it is a reflection on our department.

Requirement #2: Give a public proposal defense. As part of their MS program, we propose to have MS students give a public defense of their research proposal. The proposed format will be for students to present in our “Biolunch” forum, which is a Tuesday noon talk series. Faculty have expressed concern over the past several years that students are not given enough opportunities to present their research in a public format. Of course, practice giving presentations is key for graduate students to move on in their careers, such as giving job seminars after they graduate. As such, we propose that MS student give a public presentation of their proposed research during their second semester. During the public proposal defense, a presentation rubric will be filled out by the attendees of the talk to give the student feedback on their presentation (see attached presentation rubric). Satisfactory performance on the proposal defense will be determined by average scores on rubrics filled out by the student’s committee (Likert scale scores will be converted to numbers, and go from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent); an average score across all categories of 3 or better will constitute a pass. Students who achieve an average score of <3 will be required to re-do their proposal defense within two months of the original

scheduled date. Rubrics filled out by other (non-committee) attendees will be provided to the student for training purposes. Under extenuating circumstances (e.g., extended illness), students may request an extension to complete their proposal defense in their first summer or third semester.

Justification: There is a clear benefit for students to give as many presentations as possible in their time as a graduate student. This will allow the student to get broad feedback on their public presentation skills, as well as their proposed research in a semi-formal setting.

Current Program Requirements (new requirements since 2011 denoted with * and proposed new requirements in *italics*):

Minimum of 21 total graded credits at the 400 or 500 level

Minimum of 9 graded credits with BIOLOGY prefix

Teaching training course (Biology 585; 2 credits)*

Grant writing course (Biology 582; 2 credits)*

1 credit of special topics (Biology 589; included in the 21 graded credit minimum)

Research defense presentation

Attend departmental seminars (register for Biology 500; each semester for S/F grade)

Transfer credits follow graduate school requirements (up to 50% of graded credits)

Presenter: _____

Date: _____

EVALUATION RUBRIC: GENERAL PRESENTATIONS

Presentation Style	Poor	Fair	Competent	Good	Excellent
Uses clear and intelligible language (avoids jargon)					
Makes appropriate eye contact with audience					
Engages audience					
Effectively use of slides/ visual aids					
Clear flow of overall presentation					
Projects voice					

Content	Poor	Fair	Competent	Good	Excellent	N/A
Identifies problem(s) of significant standing in biology						
Demonstrates an understanding of historical work (i.e. context) regarding the biological problem(s)						
Formulates cogent hypotheses and/or develops corresponding experiment(s)						
Clearly describes tests and results of conceptual ideas described						
Relates the specific research outcomes to broader scientific goals						
Defends research methodology/ interpretation(s) and considers alternative interpretation(s)						
Synthesizes research in a way that communicates general importance						

Comments: